

Applying for a CRBA in Nigeria

What is a Consular Report of Birth Abroad?

A child born abroad to a U.S. citizen parent or parents may acquire U.S. citizenship at birth if certain requirements are met. A Consular Report of Birth Abroad (CRBA) is a document that certifies a child acquired U.S. citizenship at birth. For more information on specific requirements, read about [INA 301](#) and [INA 309](#).

What are the requirements for a Consular Report of Birth Abroad?

In order to qualify for a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, there must be a biological relationship between the U.S. citizen parent and the child. At least one parent must be a U.S. citizen at the time the child was born. The parents also need to meet either residency or physical presence requirements, depending on which part of the law the case falls under. For most cases in Nigeria, parents must satisfy physical presence requirements. This means the U.S. citizen parent must have a total of at least five years of physical presence in the United States, two of which are after the age of 14. The physical presence does not need to be consecutive, and it can be either before or after the parent became a U.S. citizen. However, the physical presence is counted to the day, and it must occur prior to the child's date of birth. Evidence will need to be provided in order to support each of these requirements of the law. The burden of evidence is on the applicant.

How long does the Consular Report of Birth Abroad process take? The length of time for the process depends on several factors. The first factor is the demand for the service, which can extend wait times. The second factor is the preparedness of the applicant. The third factor can be the occasional need for administrative processing, including possible DNA testing. In order to best serve our applicants, we ask that you do not request an appointment until you have collected all of the required evidence per the [CRBA checklist](#). Oftentimes, parents have not fully researched the requirements for the Consular Report of Birth Abroad, and are surprised at the interview when they are asked for additional information. They are then requested to reschedule an appointment which is not efficient for the applicant or the officer and prolongs the CRBA process. To avoid delays in processing, carefully review all of the requirements and suggested forms of evidence prior to your interview. Once the application can be approved, it can take up to 4 weeks to receive the CRBA and Passport.

What is the process to apply for the Consular Report of Birth Abroad?

- 1) Refer to the website for specific information about how to complete the forms [DS-2029](#), [DS-5507](#), [DS-11](#), and [DS-3053](#) (if applicable). Review samples to make sure you are filling the forms out correctly.
- 2) Gather all of the supporting evidence as listed on the [CRBA checklist](#).

- 3) Email the U.S. Consulate in Lagos at lagoscrba@state.gov **OR** the U.S. Embassy in Abuja at Abujacrba@state.gov. Write the subject of the email as “Last name of child, first name of child; child’s date of birth.” Where there are multiple children applying for a CRBA, include the sibling’s information in the first line in the email. We will do our best to schedule one interview day for families with multiple children. In the email, include the checklist, DS-2029, DS-5507, parent’s IDs, and child’s NPC birth certificate for each child. The process will be faster if you label each document attached to the email. The Consulate will review the forms to make sure they have been completed correctly. Once this has been completed, you will be emailed with the date and time of interview.
- 4) When corresponding with the Consulate about your case, please use the subject: “CRBA for Child’s last name; child’s first name, child’s date of birth”.
- 5) Appear for your scheduled interview at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate and answer all questions from the Consular Officer and ask any questions you have about the process. You will either be given a letter stating what evidence is missing to process your case, or you will be given a letter indicating your application has been approved or denied.
- 6) If your case is not complete, you will need to provide additional information. You will have 90 days from the date of interview to provide the requested information. The Consular Officer will indicate if you need to schedule a new appointment, or if you may simply return during walk-in hours. This will vary depending on the quantity and nature of the evidence requested.
- 7) Once all the information has been submitted and reviewed, the officer will make a citizenship determination to determine if you were able to transmit U.S. citizenship to your child. If your case is denied, you will be given a letter explaining the reason for denial. If your case is approved, you will be given information about how and where to pick up the Consular Report of Birth Abroad and Passport.

How to I schedule an appointment? You may request an appointment by emailing LagosCRBA@state.gov or AbujaCRBA@state.gov and submitting the signed [CRBA Checklist](#) and copies of the required documents. In the email, you must include the applicant’s name, date of birth, phone number, and email address for scheduling purposes. **See below for information about documents that should be submitted prior to your appointment.** Once we receive your email and review your checklist, we will respond with an appointment date. If you are late to the appointment, you will be asked to reschedule. Furthermore, if you are missing required documents or photocopies at the time of the appointment, you will also be asked to reschedule. Please plan accordingly.

What documents should I submit prior to my appointment?

All documents will be submitted electronically prior to scheduling an appointment. They do not need to be signed for the initial submission. However, you will need to submit the original documents and photocopies in person at the first interview.

Either both parents need to be present for the interview to sign forms in front of a Consular Officer **or** the forms can be signed in the U.S. according to the following:

- The DS-2029 can be signed in the U.S. before a U.S. notary (Nigerian notaries are not accepted)
 - The DS-5507 can only be signed in the U.S. in front of a **Passport Specialist or Designated Acceptance Agent**, for example at a Passport Agency located in the U.S.
1. [DS-2029](#) Application for Consular Report of Birth Abroad (required for all applicants)
 2. [DS-5507](#) Proof of Affidavit of Parentage, Physical Presence, and Support (required for some applicants, strongly recommended for all applicants)
 3. [DS-11](#) Application for U.S. passport (must be completed using the [passport wizard](#). Complete the form, hit submit, and then print out a copy that has the barcode in the upper left corner)
 4. Copies of U.S. government issued ID, Nigerian passport, or Nigerian national ID for each parent (bring original to appointment)
 5. NPC birth certificate
 6. U.S. citizenship evidence for transmitting parent (i.e. copy of U.S. passport or naturalization certificate)
 7. A signed [CRBA checklist](#) indicating you have collected the appropriate evidence of biological relationship and physical presence.

Who needs to appear at the appointment? The child and at least one parent must be present for the interview. If the child is also applying for a passport, the physical appearance of the child at the interview cannot be waived. It is preferable to have both parents appear at the appointment, but not required. If, for example, a U.S. citizen parent is in the United States, a non-U.S. citizen parent may appear for the appointment with the child. The U.S. citizen parent would need to sign the DS-2029, DS-5507, and DS-3053 at the correct place as noted above. In this example, the non-U.S. citizen parent must bring the properly signed forms to the appointment along with all other required documents.

What documents do I need to submit at my appointment? Bring all the documents noted in the [CRBA checklist](#) that pertain to your case with you to your appointment. Also bring a signed copy of the checklist itself.

How do I change or cancel my appointment?

Due to limited appointment availability, it will be difficult to reschedule and appointments once scheduled. Therefore, we encourage you to attend the appointment as scheduled. If you absolutely must reschedule the appointment, we will consider the request, but you may experience a delay.

How much does the Consular Report of Birth Abroad cost? For the most up to date fees, please check our [website](#). At this time, the Consular Report of Birth Abroad costs \$100. A passport for a minor under the age of 16 costs \$115. Please keep in mind that the applicant will also have to bear the cost of any DNA testing if recommended. Furthermore, the CRBA process is very time intensive, and sometimes

requires multiple trips to the Consulate. Please be sure to plan for travel costs and unexpected delays in the process.

What types of evidence can I submit for proof of physical presence? Physical presence refers to the days the U.S. citizen parent was physically in the United States. Acceptable forms of evidence of physical presence may include official, original school transcripts (elementary, high school, or college), [Social Security statement](#), old passports, and DD-214 (for members of the armed forces). Online coursework at U.S. Universities may not be counted as physical presence, as it is not necessary to be in the United States to complete it. Tax records (W-2's) and some employment records may sometimes be useful, but often are insufficient for evidence of physical presence alone. If parents have lost passports and are having a difficult time finding evidence of physical presence, you may want to consider requesting your Customs and Border Protection Exit and Entry records through a Freedom of Information Act request at www.foia.gov. Please keep in mind that it can take time to process these requests, so plan accordingly. The officer will look at the totality of the evidence to determine if the parent(s) met the requirements for physical presence.

What evidence is NOT acceptable evidence of proof of physical presence? The Consular Officer will not accept some tax forms (such as 1099), mortgage statements, utility bills, medical bills, online transcripts, incomplete passport records, letters from employers, etc as evidence of physical presence. Evidence of physical presence must convey an exact number of days the U.S. citizen parent was in the United States. The examples above may be evidence of residency only, which is not the same as physical presence.

What types of documents can I submit for proof of biological relationship? Biological relationship can sometimes be challenging to prove. Evidence of a biological relationship between the U.S. citizen parent and the child can be supported by evidence of the parent's relationship to each other. Therefore, it is helpful to present evidence of courtship and relationship over time and the marriage (if applicable). It is also helpful to know if there are any other children in the family relationship. The parents will need to prove they had access to each other at the time of the child's conception. This may be supported with flight itinerary or passport stamps. Antenatal records of the pregnancy of the child will also need to be provided. These should include records of doctor's visits during the pregnancy, as well as any records of scans of the child that indicate gestational age.

We recognize in some cases evidence of biological relationship is more challenging to provide. However, it is the responsibility of the applicant to provide this information and it is a requirement of law that there is a biological relationship between the U.S. citizen parent and the child.

I cannot get all of the documents before my 90 day deadline. What happens next? Except in extenuating circumstances all applications may only remain open for 90 days from the time of the initial appointment. If you cannot submit supporting evidence within the 90 days, your case will be administratively closed and the CRBA will not be issued. You will receive a denial letter that explains this

decision. If you wish to pursue the Consular Report of Birth Abroad, you will need to submit the application again and pay the fees again. In order to avoid such processing delays and added expenses, please do not request an appointment until you have gathered all of the required documents and evidence.

I cannot provide proof of biological relationship. Can I just do DNA? You should NOT initiate the DNA process until instructed to do so by a consular officer. You will be given specific instructions on what labs you may use and how to complete the process. Not all labs are accepted, and testing of the child must be done at the U.S. Consulate. Initiating the process without being asked to do so may result in increased expense and processing delays. Furthermore, the DNA process will not be initiated until all other requirements for the Consular Report of Birth Abroad are complete.

The Consular Officer recommended my child's case for DNA. What do I do next? You should have been given instructions and an explanation about the DNA process at the time of your interview. Read the instructions carefully about how to choose a lab. The fees will be paid directly to the approved lab. Once you have chosen your lab and paid your fees, please wait for the DNA unit to contact you about scheduling your DNA collection appointment. Remember that all parties being tested, including the child, will need an international passport at the time of DNA collection. Therefore, in order to avoid delays in the process, it is important to obtain the child's Nigerian passport in a timely manner. Once DNA results are received by the American Citizen Services section, they will be reviewed by a Consular Officer. If more information is needed to process the case, you will be contacted via email or phone. A decision about whether or not the child qualifies for the Consular Report of Birth Abroad will be made once the file is reviewed by a Consular Officer. You will receive a letter explaining the denial or information about collecting the documents.

My child's CRBA was denied. What do I do next? You may wish to consult with an immigration attorney to assist you through this complicated process. Your next steps will depend on the reason for the denial. If the application was "not issued" because you failed to supply required evidence within the 90 day deadline, you may be able to resubmit your application with new evidence, but you will need to pay a new fee. Remember, your application will only be considered if you provide new evidence. If your application was denied, you may have different options. An application may be denied because neither parent was a U.S. citizen when the child was born or there was no genetic relationship between the U.S. citizen parent and the child. In each of these cases, the child will never qualify for a CRBA. Therefore, the parents may want to consider the Immigrant visa process. Again, it may be best to consult with an immigration attorney about your specific case.